THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI S.R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Shergotty meteorite which fell in Shergotty village in Gaya district of Bihar on 25th August, 1865 is kept in the archival collection of Geological Survey of India (GSI) as GSI is the custodian of all meteorites found in India. The original weight of this meteorite was 4890 grams. Main bulk of this sample weighing 3600 grams is kept in GSI and small quantities of this meteorite were given to the following institutions by GSI as per exchange programme on meteorites;

(i) The United States Natural History Museum, Washington

(ii) Natural History Museum, Vienna

(iii) Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago

(iv) American Museum of Natural History, New York

(v) British Museum of Natural History, London

Exhaustive scientific study on the meteorite was conducted by a Consortium of scientists (called Shergotty Consortium) from GSI, Physical Research Laboratory (PRL) (Ahmedabad) from India and those from reputed international institutions like National Aerounautics and Space Administration (NASA) of USA, Max Plank Institute (MPI) of Germany and other scientific institutions. The findings have been published from time to time and an exhaustive account is available in the well known journal "Geochimica et Cosmochimica Acta", Vol.50, No.4, p.875-1091, 1986.

Martian origin of this Shergotty meteorite has been deduced from the results of the studies indicating a strong similarity of major element composition of Shergotty with Martian soil determined by the Viking Spacecraft, especially by the indicator element Ferrous Oxide (FeO) and from the evidence of trapped noble gas and nitrogen composition in glasses in the meteorite.

(c) There are a number of scientific studies which are possible to carry out using Martian rocks. These include the origin and evolution of the Solar System, comparison of the evolution and development of Martian terrain, soil & atmosphere with those of the Earth and search for possible existence of life beyond our planet. These studies also help in improving the understanding of the Solar System and various geological and atmospheric processes on planets, including Earth.

Transfer of Schemes

2243. SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether in a major initiative to devolve power to States, the Planning Commission has proposed that funds for 115 Centrally Sponsored development schemes be given directly to State Governments and they be made incharge of managing and implementing these schemes;

(b) if so, the schemes likely to be brought under jurisdiction of the State Governments;

(c) the Union Government's role in these schemes;

(d) whether some of the State Governments have been diverting the funds from one scheme to the other and important schemes are delayed due to this diversion; and

(e) if so, whether the Union Government will have any direct control to ensure that these schemes are fully implemented and the funds allocated for them are not diverted for other purposes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRIMATI RATNAMALA D. SAVANOOR) : (a) to (e) An exercise has been done in Planning Commission on the question of transfer of Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) to the States. A note on the subject has been sent to concerned Central Ministries/Departments and all States/ UT Governments for their comments. On receipt of the same, a revised and detailed note on the issues involved will be prepared for consideration of the Full Planning Commission and National Development Council (NDC). In line with the Approach Paper, a process of joint plan formulation and joint monitoring would also be evolved between the Planning Commission and the State Governments.

Use of Electronic Voice Sensor

2244. SHRI CHHITUBHAI GAMIT : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether experiment of implant an electronic voice sensor in the inner ear of a totally deaf person has become successful and

(b) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY) : (a) and (b) Implant of an electronic voice

sensor, known as cochlear implant, has been found successful in patients who have no serviceable hearing in both ears and who are not benefited by conventional hearing aids. The implant is surgically inserted into the inner ear and after wound healing, the patient usually gets benefit in six weeks to one year's time with the help of some training. Individual users report different levels of benefit from the implant.

[Translation]

Filaria Patients

2245. SHRI JAI PRAKASH AGARWAL : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of filaria patients in Delhi at present;

(b) the number of filaria eradication centres functioning in Delhi;

(c) the nature of assistance provided by the Government to each centre during each of the last three years; and

(d) the assistance proposed to be provided to these centres during the current year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY) : (a) to (d) Delhi is known to be free from Filariasis and no Filariasis Control Programme is being implemented in Delhi.

However, under the Urban Malaria Scheme necessary antilarval measures are undertaken for the control of mosquito vectors.

[English]

Industrial Training Institutes

2246. SHRI RAM NAIK : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) Whether a number of applications for affiliation from the Industrial Training Institutes in Maharashtra are pending with the National Council for Vocational Training (NCVT) for decision since long;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government are aware that due to non-affiliation, a large number of trainees from Maharashtra is likely to be deprived of the opportunity to appear for the examination; and

(d) if so, the steps taken/proposed to be taken to ensure that the trainees are allowed to appear for the examination?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR) : (a) No, Sir. The last meeting of the Sub-Committee of National Council for Vocational Training (NCVT) dealing with affiliation was held on 18.6.97. In that meeting, 45 cases which had been recommended by the Standing Committee, comprising of representatives of Central and State Governments and also representatives of Industry and labour and received in DGET till 31.5.97, were examined and disposed off.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Yes, Sir. The State Director dealing with Craftsman Training Scheme should have permitted only the management of those institutes to admit trainees in the trades which have been recommended for affiliation by the Standing Committee. The problem has arisen as number of Industrial Training Institutes/Centres had admitted trainees prior to the inspection by the Standing Committee.

(d) Considering the administrative delays and difficulties in conducting inspections by the Standing Committees, a decision was taken in July, 1997 that the trainees of the institutes which have been inspected by the representatives of the respective State Council for Vocational Training (SCVT) and found fulfilling the norms of NCVT, be allowed to appear provisionally in the July, 1997 of All India Trade Test, conducted by NCVT, However, the results of trainees from such institutes will not be declared till they secure affiliation of trades/units from NCVT. This was a one time relaxation extended to all the States for July, 97 examination.

[Translation]

Maternal Mortality Rate

2247. SHRI MANIBHAI RAMJIBHAI CHAUDHARI : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the pregnant women are dying in a large number during delivery due to malnutrition and other reasons;

(b) if so, the number of women died during the last three months in various parts of the country, State-wise particularly in Gujarat;

(c) whether the Government are contemplating any concrete steps to deal with the situation; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?